MODULE 2: Union

Union Government and its Administration:

India is a federal parliamentary democratic republic. It means that the country is both federal in nature (with division of powers between the Union and States) and parliamentary (with elected representatives forming the government).

The Union Government of India is the central government that governs the entire country. It is responsible for handling matters of national importance and coordinating with the state governments.

Structure of the Indian Union

The Indian Union, as outlined in the Constitution of India, is a federal structure with a strong central government. It consists of three main branches:

1. The Executive

The executive branch is responsible for implementing and enforcing laws. It is divided into two parts:

President of India:

- The President is the ceremonial head of the state and is the supreme commander of the armed forces.
- The President acts on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers.
- Powers include appointing the Prime Minister, issuing ordinances, and declaring emergencies.

Council of Ministers:

- Headed by the Prime Minister, who is the real head of the government.
- The Council of Ministers, including Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State, and Deputy Ministers, is responsible for the day-to-day administration and decision-making.
- The Prime Minister is the leader of the majority party in the Lok Sabha (House of the People).

2. The Legislature

The legislature, or Parliament, is responsible for making laws. It is bicameral, consisting of two houses:

Lok Sabha (House of the People):

- Members are directly elected by the people.
- The Lok Sabha is the lower house of Parliament and has greater power in matters like money bills.
- The Prime Minister must maintain the confidence of the Lok Sabha.

Rajya Sabha (Council of States):

- Members are elected by the state legislative assemblies and by the President for nominated members.
- It is the upper house of Parliament and represents the states and union territories.
- It reviews and suggests amendments to legislation proposed by the Lok Sabha.

3. The Judiciary

The judiciary interprets the laws and ensures they are consistent with the Constitution. It is independent of the executive and legislature.

Supreme Court of India:

- The highest judicial authority in India.
- The Supreme Court has original jurisdiction, appellate jurisdiction, and advisory jurisdiction.
- It can strike down laws passed by the legislature if they are unconstitutional.

High Courts and Subordinate Courts:

- Each state has its own High Court, which is the highest judicial authority in the state.
- Below the High Courts are the subordinate courts, which include district courts and other lower courts handling civil and criminal cases.

Federal Structure with a Strong Centre

Division of Powers:

- The Constitution divides powers between the Union and State governments through three lists: Union List, State List, and Concurrent List.
- The **Union List** includes subjects on which only the central government can legislate (e.g., defense, foreign affairs).
- The **State List** includes subjects on which only state governments can legislate (e.g., police, public health).
- The **Concurrent List** includes subjects on which both the Union and State governments can legislate (e.g., education, marriage).

Amendment Procedure:

The Constitution can be amended by the Parliament, but certain amendments affecting federal structure require ratification by at least half of the state legislatures.

Centre-State Relationship:

The Constitution defines the powers and responsibilities of both the Union and State governments. This relationship can be categorized into three lists: Union List (subjects exclusively under Union control), State List (subjects exclusively under State control), and Concurrent List (subjects on which both can legislate).

Role of the President of India

The President of India is the ceremonial head of the state and the highest constitutional authority in the country. As the first citizen of India, the President represents the unity and integrity of the nation. Though the role is largely ceremonial, the President plays a crucial part in the functioning of the Indian parliamentary democracy.

Powers of the President of India

The powers of the President can be categorized as follows:

1. Executive Powers:

- **Head of the Union Executive:** The President appoints the Prime Minister and, on the Prime Minister's advice, appoints the Council of Ministers.

- **Appointments:** The President appoints key officials, including Governors of states, the Chief Justice and judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts, and ambassadors.
- **Military:** The President is the supreme commander of the Indian armed forces and appoints the chiefs of the Army, Navy, and Air Force.
- **Ordinances:** The President can issue ordinances when Parliament is not in session, which have the same effect as laws passed by Parliament.

2. Legislative Powers:

- **Summoning and Proroguing:** The President can summon and prorogue the sessions of Parliament and dissolve the Lok Sabha.
- **Assent to Bills:** A bill passed by Parliament becomes law only after the President's assent. The President can return a bill for reconsideration, except for money bills.
- **Nomination:** The President can nominate 12 members to the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) and 2 members to the Lok Sabha (House of the People) from the Anglo-Indian community (if the community is underrepresented).

3. Judicial Powers:

- **Pardoning Powers:** The President has the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites, or remission of punishment. This includes the power to commute death sentences.
- **Judicial Appointments:** The President appoints judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts.

4. Diplomatic Powers:

- The President represents India in international forums and diplomatic affairs.
- The President appoints ambassadors and high commissioners and receives foreign diplomats.

5. Emergency Powers:

- **National Emergency:** The President can declare a national emergency in case of war, external aggression, or armed rebellion.
- **President's Rule:** The President can impose President's Rule in a state if the state government fails to function according to the provisions of the Constitution.
- **Financial Emergency:** The President can declare a financial emergency if the financial stability or credit of India is threatened.

Position of the President of India

- **Ceremonial Head:** The President's position is largely ceremonial, as real executive power is exercised by the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers. The President acts on the advice of the Council of Ministers.

- **Symbol of Unity:** The President represents the unity and integrity of the nation.

- **Guardian of the Constitution:** The President has a role in ensuring that the Constitution is upheld and that the government functions within the constitutional framework.

- **Arbiter in Crises:** In situations where there is no clear majority in the Lok Sabha or when there is a need to resolve a constitutional crisis, the President's discretion becomes significant.

Prime Minister and Council of Ministers

Prime Minister (PM)

- **Role:** The Prime Minister is the head of the government and the leader of the executive branch. As the chief advisor to the President, the PM plays a key role in decision-making, policy formulation, and administration.

- **Appointment:** The Prime Minister is appointed by the President, usually the leader of the majority party in the Lok Sabha (House of the People).

- **Responsibilities:**
  - Leads the Council of Ministers and is responsible for the functioning of the government.
  - Represents the country domestically and internationally.
  - Acts as the link between the President and the Council of Ministers.
  - Guides and coordinates the work of various ministries.

Council of Ministers

- **Structure:** The Council of Ministers is a body of ministers headed by the Prime Minister, consisting of Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State, and Deputy Ministers.

  - **Cabinet Ministers:** Senior ministers in charge of major ministries (e.g., Home, Finance, Defence). They play a significant role in decision-making and are part of the Cabinet.

- **Ministers of State:** They may either have independent charge of smaller ministries or assist Cabinet Ministers in specific areas.
  - **Deputy Ministers:** They assist ministers and handle specific tasks within a ministry.

- **Collective Responsibility:** The Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. This means that all ministers, including the Prime Minister, are accountable to the Parliament for their actions and decisions.

- **Decision-Making:** The Council of Ministers formulates and implements government policies, and the Cabinet plays a crucial role in major policy decisions.

Cabinet

- **Composition:** The Cabinet is a smaller group within the Council of Ministers, consisting of the most senior ministers. It is the core decision-making body of the government.

- **Functions:**

  - **Policy Formulation:** The Cabinet is responsible for formulating major policies and making decisions on important national and international issues.

  - **Administration:** It coordinates the work of different ministries and ensures the smooth functioning of the government.

  - **Advisory Role:** The Cabinet advises the President on matters related to governance and administration.

- **Meetings:** The Cabinet meets regularly to discuss and decide on government policies and issues.

Central Secretariat

- **Role:** The Central Secretariat is the administrative arm of the government that assists in policy formulation, coordination, and implementation. It serves as the hub of the executive branch and supports the Council of Ministers.

- **Structure:**

  - **Ministries/Departments:** Each ministry or department is headed by a Cabinet Minister, with a Secretary (a senior civil servant) as the administrative head.

- **Secretaries:** Secretaries are responsible for the administration and implementation of policies within their respective ministries. They provide advice to ministers and ensure that decisions are executed effectively.

- **Functions:**

  - **Policy Implementation:** The Secretariat implements the policies and decisions made by the Cabinet and the Council of Ministers.

  - **Coordination:** It coordinates activities between different ministries and departments to ensure smooth governance.

  - **Advisory:** The Central Secretariat provides expert advice to ministers and assists in drafting policies and legislation.

Key Points

- The Prime Minister leads the government, supported by the Council of Ministers.

- The Cabinet is the core group within the Council, making key decisions and guiding national policies.

- The Central Secretariat acts as the administrative machinery, ensuring that government decisions and policies are effectively implemented.

PRACTICE SET: MODULE 2

2 Marks (BL1)

1. What is federalism?

2. Which two levels of government share power in the Indian federal system?

3. Name the three types of lists that categorize the powers of the Indian government.

4. What is the significance of the Seventh Schedule in the Indian Constitution?

5. Which Article of the Indian Constitution deals with the division of powers between the center and states?

6. What is a "unitary" feature in the Indian federal system?

7. Who is responsible for resolving disputes between the center and states in India?

8. Name one state in India with its own constitution.

9. What is the role of the Rajya Sabha in the federal structure of India?

10. Which organization oversees the distribution of financial resources between the center and states in India?

2 Marks (BL2)

1. Explain the difference between the President of India and the Prime Minister in terms of their roles and powers.

2. Describe the primary function of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha in India's parliamentary system.

3. Briefly compare the roles of the Chief Minister and the Governor in an Indian state. How do their powers and responsibilities differ?

4. Identify the key features that distinguish a federal system of government from a unitary system, as seen in India.

5. Explain the role of political parties in influencing the power structure and decision-making processes in India.

6. Describe the constitutional provisions that ensure the separation of powers in the Indian government.

7. How is the Prime Minister of India appointed?

8. What do you understand about the Collective Responsibility of the Council of Ministers?

9. Comment on the process of removal of the Governor of states in India.

10. How is the state council of Ministers appointed?

5 Marks (BL3)

1. Apply your understanding to analyze how the Prime Minister's role and powers differ from those of other Council of Ministers' members. Discuss the implications of these differences on the decision-making process and governance in India.

2. Given a recent policy initiative by the Indian central government, analyze how the Central Secretariat's functions facilitated its development and implementation. What specific roles did the Secretariat play in ensuring the policy's success?

3. Describe the process of policy formulation and implementation within the Indian government, focusing on the roles played by the Prime Minister, the Council of Ministers, and the Central Secretariat. Discuss the challenges and benefits of this system.

4. Apply your understanding to critically analyze the three-tier structure of the Council of Ministers in India. Discuss how this structure impacts decision-making and governance at various levels, and evaluate the effectiveness of this system in addressing both local and national issues.

5. Using your knowledge, assess how the functions of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha influence the legislative process. How do the Speaker's responsibilities in managing

debates, enforcing rules, and representing the House affect the efficiency and effectiveness of parliamentary operations?

6. Consider the role of federalism in India and discuss its impact on both national unity and regional diversity. How does the federal structure facilitate or challenge effective governance and regional representation? Use specific instances to highlight the practical effects of federalism on policy and administration.

10 Marks (BL2)

1. Compare and contrast the composition, powers, and functions of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha in India's parliamentary system. How do these two houses work together to ensure the legislative process functions effectively?

2. Demonstrate the functions of the Chief Minister in relation to the Council of Ministers, to the Governor and the State Legislature.

3. Explain the financial functions of the President of India.

4. Explain the relationship between the Centre and the States in India.

5. The Prime Minister is the link between the President and the Cabinet. Discuss.

6. Decisions taken by the Chief Minister and other ministers should be debated in the Legislative Assembly. Explain.

MODULE 4: LOCAL GOVERNMENT

District Administration

District's Administration Head: Role and Importance

District Collector/District Magistrate (DM):

Role: The District Collector, also known as the District Magistrate (DM) or Deputy Commissioner, is the head of district administration. This position holds significant responsibility in the administration of the district, which is the basic unit of governance in India.

Responsibilities:

- **Revenue Collection:** Responsible for the collection of land revenue and other government dues.
- **Law and Order:** Maintains law and order in the district as the chief executive magistrate. Coordinates with the police and other law enforcement agencies.
- **Disaster Management:** Oversees disaster preparedness and response within the district.
- **Elections:** Acts as the Returning Officer during elections, ensuring free and fair elections in the district.
- **Developmental Activities:** Implements government schemes and development programs at the district level.

Importance: The District Collector is crucial for implementing government policies, maintaining order, and ensuring the welfare of the people at the grassroots level.

Municipalities

Introduction

- **Definition:** Municipalities are urban local bodies responsible for the governance of cities and towns. They are established to provide civic amenities and manage urban infrastructure.

Types:

- **Municipal Corporation:** Found in large cities with a population of over one million.
- **Municipal Council:** Governs smaller towns and cities.
- **Nagar Panchayat:** Governs areas transitioning from rural to urban.

Mayor and Role of Elected Representatives

Mayor:

Role: The Mayor is the ceremonial head of a Municipal Corporation, elected by the councilors from among themselves or directly by the public, depending on the state laws.

Responsibilities:

- **Presiding Officer:** Chairs the meetings of the Municipal Corporation and represents the municipality at official functions.

- **Policy Leadership:** Provides leadership in formulating policies for urban governance and development.

- **Representation:** Acts as a representative of the municipal government to the public and higher authorities.

Importance: Though often a ceremonial position, the Mayor plays a crucial role in setting the vision for urban development and ensuring effective civic administration.

Elected Representatives (Councilors):

Role: Councilors are elected members of the Municipal Corporation who represent different wards (areas) within the city.

Responsibilities:

- **Legislation:** Participate in the making of municipal laws, policies, and budgets.

- **Public Service:** Address the grievances of the public and ensure the provision of basic services like water, sanitation, and roads.

- **Oversight:** Monitor the functioning of municipal departments and the execution of development projects.

Importance: Elected representatives play a key role in voicing the concerns of the local population and ensuring that the municipal administration is accountable.

CEO of Municipal Corporation

Role: The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Municipal Commissioner is the administrative head of the Municipal Corporation. They are usually appointed by the state government.

Responsibilities:

- **Administration:** Manages the day-to-day functioning of the Municipal Corporation and ensures the implementation of policies and decisions made by the elected representatives.

- **Execution of Projects:** Oversees the execution of urban development projects, infrastructure maintenance, and delivery of public services.
- **Budget Management:** Responsible for preparing and managing the municipal budget, ensuring financial discipline.
- **Coordination:** Coordinates with various municipal departments and external agencies to ensure effective governance.

Importance: The CEO plays a critical role in bridging the gap between the elected body (headed by the Mayor) and the administrative machinery, ensuring the smooth execution of municipal functions.

Panchayati Raj: Introduction

Definition: Panchayati Raj is a system of rural local self-government in India, which empowers villagers to manage their own affairs. It was institutionalized through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992.

Structure: The Panchayati Raj system operates at three levels:

- Gram Panchayat (Village Level)
- Panchayat Samiti (Block Level)
- Zila Parishad (District Level)

Objective: The system aims to decentralize governance and empower rural communities by bringing government closer to the people and enabling them to participate in decision-making processes.

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI): Zila Panchayat

Zila Panchayat (Zila Parishad):

Role: The Zila Panchayat is the top tier of the Panchayati Raj system, functioning at the district level. It oversees the administration and development activities across the district and coordinates with the lower tiers (Gram Panchayats and Panchayat Samitis).

Responsibilities:

- Formulating district-level development plans.
- Supervising and coordinating activities of the Panchayat Samitis.
- Implementing and monitoring government schemes.
- Managing public infrastructure and services like health, education, and sanitation.

Elected Officials and Their Roles

Elected Officials:

Zila Panchayat Chairperson:

Role: The Chairperson is the elected head of the Zila Panchayat and presides over its meetings. The Chairperson plays a key role in policy-making and ensuring the implementation of development programs.

Responsibilities:

- Represents the Zila Panchayat in official matters.
- Guides the planning and execution of district-level projects.
- Coordinates with government officials and other Panchayat members.

Zila Panchayat Members:

Role: Elected representatives from various constituencies within the district. They participate in decision-making and work on issues affecting their respective areas.

Responsibilities:

- Advocate for the needs of their constituencies.
- Monitor the implementation of development schemes.
- Participate in committee meetings and contribute to planning processes.

CEO Zila Panchayat: Position and Role

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Zila Panchayat:

Position: The CEO is a senior government official appointed by the state government to assist the Zila Panchayat in administrative functions.

Role:

- **Administration:** Manages the day-to-day operations of the Zila Panchayat and ensures the implementation of its decisions.
- **Execution:** Oversees the execution of development projects and government schemes at the district level.
- **Coordination:** Coordinates with the Chairperson, elected members, and various government departments to ensure effective governance.
- **Advisory:** Provides expert advice to the elected body on administrative and financial matters.

Block Level: Organizational Hierarchy

Panchayat Samiti (Block Level):

Structure: The Panchayat Samiti is the middle tier of the Panchayati Raj system, functioning at the block level.

Key Departments:

- **Agriculture Department:** Focuses on enhancing agricultural productivity and implementing agricultural schemes.

- **Health Department:** Manages public health programs and ensures the provision of healthcare services.

- **Education Department:** Oversees the functioning of schools and implements educational initiatives.

- **Public Works Department:** Responsible for the construction and maintenance of infrastructure, including roads and buildings.

- **Social Welfare Department:** Implements welfare schemes aimed at the upliftment of marginalized communities.

Key Officials:

- **Block Development Officer (BDO):** The BDO is the executive head at the block level, responsible for implementing government schemes and supervising the work of Gram Panchayats.

Village Level: Role of Elected and Appointed Officials

Gram Panchayat (Village Level):

Sarpanch (Village Head):

Role: The Sarpanch is the elected head of the Gram Panchayat, responsible for leading the village administration and ensuring the implementation of government programs.

Responsibilities:

- Presides over Gram Sabha meetings.
- Represents the village in interactions with higher government authorities.
- Oversees development activities in the village.

Gram Panchayat Members:

Role: Elected representatives of the villagers who assist the Sarpanch in decision-making and governance.

Responsibilities:

- Participate in Gram Panchayat meetings.
- Address the concerns of villagers and ensure their participation in governance.
- Monitor the implementation of schemes and services at the village level.

Appointed Officials (Secretary of Gram Panchayat):

Role: A government-appointed official who assists the Gram Panchayat in administrative tasks.

Responsibilities:

- Maintains records and documents.
- Facilitates communication between the Gram Panchayat and higher authorities.
- Supports the Sarpanch in implementing government schemes.

Importance of Grassroots Democracy

- **Empowerment:** Panchayati Raj institutions empower rural communities by involving them directly in decision-making processes, ensuring that their needs and concerns are addressed.

- **Decentralization:** The system decentralizes governance, bringing it closer to the people and making it more responsive and accountable.

- **Participation:** Grassroots democracy promotes active participation of citizens in governance, which is crucial for the success of democratic principles.

- **Inclusive Development:** It ensures that development initiatives are tailored to the specific needs of rural areas, leading to more equitable and sustainable growth.

MODULE 4

2 Marks (BL1)

1. Name the Viceroy who created the local bodies in British India.
2. Who heads a Municipal Corporation?
3. What is the purpose of PESA act?
4. Where was India's first Municipal Corporation set up?

5. Which Constitution (Amendment) Acts provided for the formation of the Metropolitan Planning Committee?

6. According to the Constitution of India, it is obligatory to constitute 'Ward Committees' in the area of a municipality. What should be the population of such a municipality?

7. Mention the views of Mahatma Gandhi on village Panchayats.

8. What is the composition of Gram Sabha?

9. What are the sources of income of Zila Parishad?

10. What is the function of the finance commission?

11. What are the functions of the state finance commission?

12. What are the functions of a Municipal Commissioner?

13. What are the main functions of Gram Sabha?

14. What do you understand of the weaknesses of the Panchayati Raj system?

15. What are the three tiers of administration in urban areas?

5 Marks (BL2)

1. Explain the composition of Block Panchayat or Panchayat Samiti.

2. 'The local government strengthens democracy' Explain the statement.

3. Discuss the importance of local bodies in modern times?

4. How does the Municipal Corporation get its money?

5. What are the judicial powers of Gram Panchayat? Can you give some real life examples of Gram Panchayat exceeding its judicial powers in certain cases?

6. Discuss the powers and functions of Municipal Corporation in development of a municipal area?

7. What is meant by Urbanization? What is the reason for it and what are its ill effects in the context of India?

10 Marks (BL5)

1. Before 1992, self-government in India did not take root. Explain. Why do you think it took so long after independence, for it to happen effectively?

2. There can be situations where contending interests come into play in the Development of a City. Say, there is a need to construct an express ring freeway for efficient dispersal of traffic. In order to decongest, poor underprivileged people have to be shifted to the outskirts. What type of conflict of interest may arise in this type of situation? Discuss what you think is the role of government in such a situation?

3. Soompa sarpanch seat fell within the quota reserved for women. Nevertheless, panchayat residents considered this as a contest between the candidates' husbands and

a faceoff among 'equals'. On one hand was the incumbent sarpanch, Ram Rai Mewada who owns a liquor shop in Kekri and on the other Chand Singh Thakur, a rich landowner from the same village. Interestingly, Mewada had been exposed by the village residents for faking muster rolls in the drought relief works during 2002-03. Although no action was taken against him, the villagers were determined to see him out of office this time and thus put up the thakur for a stiff competition. The residents of Sooma unanimously decided that the thakur was best suited to oppose Mewada. (A.) Discuss the Role of wealth and privilege? (B)Role of villagers?

4. "By viewing the powers and functions of a Mayor, it can be said that the position is more of a figurehead than an active functionary". Evaluate. What may be done to strengthen his position?

5. There can be situations where contending interests come into play in the Development of a City. Say, there is a need to construct an express ring freeway for efficient dispersal of traffic. In order to decongest, poor underprivileged people have to be shifted to the outskirts. What type of conflict of interest may arise in this type of situation? Discuss what you think is the role of government in such a situation?